

REPORTS AND ATTACHMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION AT  
WINCANTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
ON MONDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2022

Wincanton Town Council	Report: Chairman's Report
Full Council Meeting	Author: Cllr Shelbourn-Barrow
Date: Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2022	

## Chairman's Report

February continues to be a busy time for the Town Council. Our first newsletter of the new year was published in January, and we now prepare for the next version.

The community fridge, freezer and larder continue to be a positive addition with the continued support from the COOP and Morrisons. You will be aware that the fridge was purchased from fundraising in the town during COVID, the fridge/freezer was a grant, and the larder was also purchased from COVID fundraising. We spent the donation from a local group on volunteers receiving hygiene training and we look forward to expanding our reducing waste initiative. We have received some many positive comments from residents in the town.

2022 has much to look forward to. The Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II will I am sure be celebrated by our residents. However, the Council is exploring the planting of trees, with a commemorative bench, to honour this momentous occasion, alongside other emerging ideas.

The council is considering a range of activities to take place in the town throughout the year following our amazing Christmas parade and summer Cale Park event and Skate Jam and details will be made available in due course.

In my role as Mayor and Chairman, I attended Wells Cathedral on the 6<sup>th</sup> February to take part in the Choral Evensong celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Accession of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This was an opportunity to speak with Councillors and dignitaries such as the High Sheriff of Somerset.

Councillors and residents will be aware that the funding secured to develop Wincanton's town brand has commenced. This will be shared with Council and residents when proposed images are available. Key stakeholders in the town have been part of the panel to review tenders and a preferred provider has been secured. This is part of the wider work to promote the town and the regeneration of our high street.

The Wellbeing Local Community Network (LCN) pilot launch is in April 2022. Councillors have received papers on what is an LCN, the survey and as it emerges the terms of reference for the Wellbeing LCN. This is an opportunity for the three town councils and parishes across East Somerset to map what is available for residents and where there are gaps to consider how to meet the need of our residents. More to follow on this as the pilot and local government reorganisation moves forward.

Cllr Sue Shelbourn-Barrow

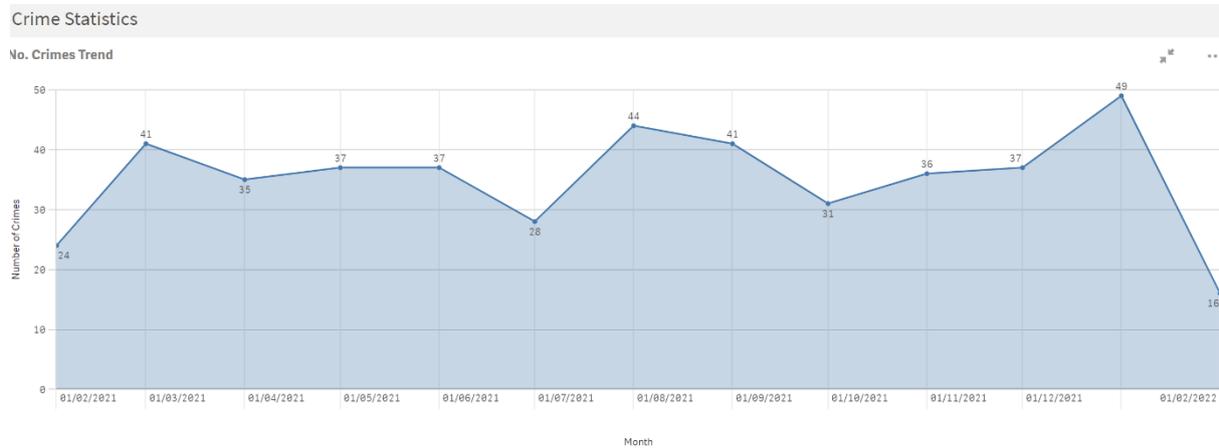
**Number of Crimes by Offence Type:**

**Jan – Feb 2022**

Arson and Criminal Damage	4
Burglary	3
Drug Offences	2
Miscellaneous Crimes against Society	-
Non Recordable	-
Possession of Weapons	-
Public Order Offences	8
Robbery	-
Sexual Offences	2
Theft	5
Theft from Motor Vehicle	-
Vehicle Offences	1
Violence against the Person	24

**Total Crimes 49**

**Number of Crimes Trend**



**CURRENT PACT PRIORITIES:**

- ASB and Criminal Damage Cale Park Regular patrols of area by NPT Teams.
- Safeguarding vulnerable members of the Community – Assisting response officers with reported missing persons.
- Drug related issues

**FUTURE PACT PRIORITIES:**

- Crime Prevention
- Education in Schools
- Community Engagement in local clubs and organised events
- Community Speed watch Support

## SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL

### BRIEFING SHEET FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

#### FEBRUARY 2022

**Coronavirus infection rates:** As of 28<sup>th</sup> January the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 106,569 (27% up from 83,300 on 30<sup>th</sup> December) and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 977. The rate per 100,000 stands at 964.2 (766.6) for Somerset with Mendip at 766.5 (892.0), Sedgemoor at 1143.1 (756.6), South Somerset 921.3 (684.3) and SW&T at 1016.0 (770.4). The number of total deaths across the County is currently below the 5-year average and the latest R-value for Somerset is between 0.8 and 1.1

***Infection rates in Somerset continue to be extremely high. With the new Omicron variant it is still advisable, even for those who have had both jabs and the relaxation in Government guidelines to continue to observe Social Distancing and to always ventilate indoor areas.***

**Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline:** A single phone number continues to be available for anyone in Somerset who needs Coronavirus-related support. **0300 790 6275**, is open seven days a week from 8am to 6pm.

**Vaccination programmes roll-out:** Somerset continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in the country with the latest figures showing over 96.2% of the 18+ population having had one dose of vaccine and 93.8% having had both doses. In total 63.7% of the adult population have also received their booster.

**Local Government Reorganisation:** Following the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) decision to support the move to a single Unitary Council across Somerset the Structural Changes Order was laid before Parliament on 24<sup>th</sup> January. The agreed vesting date remains 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The first elections to the new authority together with Somerset Town and Parish elections will be held on 5th May 2022.

**County Council Revenue Budget:** Somerset County Council has published its last draft proposed budget ahead of the creation of a new unitary Somerset Council in April 2023. The council is proposing major increases in investment in care services, with an increase for Adult Social Care of £18m (13%), and over £12m (also 13%) for Children's Services. The increase in funding for Adult Social Care in part reflects the council's recent decision to support an increase in carers pay and to provide a retention bonus for care staff in Somerset. This is intended to support the recruitment and retention of staff in a challenging job market for care services.

Wincanton Town Council	Report: Somerset Bus Partnership
Full Council Meeting	Author: Locum Clerk
Date: 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2022	

## **SOMERSET BUS PARTNERSHIP – FEBRUARY UPDATE**

We have had a very busy few months since our last regional Zoom meetings with Somerset Bus Partnership representatives.

This note is therefore an update but also a call for urgent action.

First, to update you on the progress that Somerset Bus Partnership continues to make in terms of representing and advancing the cause of bus passengers in the Somerset area through the Bus Back Better process.

All our co-chairs now have seats on the key decision-making Bus Advisory Board (this Board is primarily a forum for all the bus operators in Somerset). We also have Peter Travis as Chair and Tony Reese as Vice Chair of the Bus User and Stakeholder Bus Group. We have had two meetings of the Bus Advisory Board and Bus User and Stakeholder Bus Group.

We are in ongoing dialogue with MPs, County and District Councillors, officers at SCC and bus company executives. We have written to Boris Johnson and Baroness Vera.

We have been lobbying Somerset County Council to increase their funding of buses and have spoken at the SCC Scrutiny meetings as part of the budget review process for 2022/2023. We have also written to all the political parties with the Somerset Bus Partnership manifesto for buses. We have so far met with the Lib Dem, Labour and Green party representatives.

Peter Travis has met with David Warburton MP, and he is currently seeing if a meeting can be arranged with David Fothergill, Leader of Somerset County Council, to discuss bus funding.

There is no announcement from the Department of Transport on how much money Somerset County Council will get for their Bus Service Improvement plan but they should hopefully hear in February. As soon as we have more information about the funding and next steps we will arrange a further meeting with our representatives.

Whether it is shaping the Bus Service Improvement Plan for the benefit of current and potential passengers or playing a pivotal role in moving forward ground breaking bus decarbonisation initiatives, Somerset Bus Partnership has been front and centre of it all.

But we couldn't do any of it without the support and efforts of you, the 'local representatives' in the villages and towns of Somerset.

We now have over 110 representatives from across the county of Somerset ... we applaud you for stepping forward and taking on this role on behalf of your communities. It is because of your efforts the Somerset Bus Partnership gets a place at the top table and ensures our collective voice is heard about the issues facing bus users. Your input on your local bus issues is invaluable to us, and we have already raised with the key players many of the submissions that we have received. Please do keep them coming.

## **URGENT ACTION NEEDED**

### **Bus Services in Somerset Under Threat**

The Covid-19 Bus Recovery Grant funding is currently enabling our bus services in Somerset to operate despite most of our bus routes operating at only 60% of pre Covid levels.

If the Covid-19 Bus Recovery Grant funding is not extended into April and beyond, we will see our bus services slashed.

The Local Government Association is suggesting in April our bus services could be cut by 30%. Some bus services will go completely. Wera Hobhouse, Bath's MP, has warned bus services will likely fall off a cliff in April if the Bus Recovery Grant is not extended. A leading bus operator said, "The bus sector is hurtling towards disaster."

Therefore, could you please ... urgently ... send an email (doesn't need to be long) to the Government Buses Minister demanding that the Covid-19 Bus Recovery Grant funding is continued beyond April:

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON (Buses Minister) - email [verec@parliament.uk](mailto:verec@parliament.uk)

Also we suggest you copy your email to your MP (below are the email addresses of Somerset's MPs so please cc your MP):

- o MARCUS FYSH (Yeovil) - email [marcus.fysh.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:marcus.fysh.mp@parliament.uk)
- o IAN LIDDELL-GRAINGER (Bridgwater and West Somerset) - email [ianlg@parliament.uk](mailto:ianlg@parliament.uk)
- o DAVID WARBURTON (Somerton and Frome) - email [david.warburton.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:david.warburton.mp@parliament.uk)
- o JAMES HEAPPEY (Wells) - email [james.heappey.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:james.heappey.mp@parliament.uk)
- o REBECCA POW (Taunton Deane) - email [rebecca.pow.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:rebecca.pow.mp@parliament.uk)

Please also copy in Somerset Bus Partnership to any emails too. Our email address: [somersetbuspartnership@gmail.com](mailto:somersetbuspartnership@gmail.com)

Additionally, if you should speak to candidates for the Somerset Unitary Council May elections, please ask them what their plans are to protect and improve our bus services here in Somerset.

There's never been a time when our bus services in Somerset have been at so much risk.

Your campaigning can make a difference.

Many thanks for all that you do.

The Somerset Bus Partnership Team.

# **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

The Freedom of Information Act requires every public authority to adopt and maintain a publication of information scheme which has been approved by the Information Commissioner, and to publish information in accordance with the scheme. Wincanton Town Council information available under the Model Publication Scheme is available from the Town Hall office and a copy is available on Wincanton Town Council website.

The Freedom of Information Act covers any recorded information that is held by a public authority. Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs, sound and video recordings. Under the Freedom of Information Act there are a number of exemptions that can prevent the information becoming public, such as confidential information which fall under the General Data Protection Regulations. However, for those exemptions, a request may only be refused if the public interest in withholding the information outweighs that in disclosing it. Wincanton Town Council Data Protection Policy is available from the Town Hall office and a copy is available on Wincanton Town Council website.

### **REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION**

The Town Clerk is responsible for responding to requests. If you have any queries regarding the Freedom of Information Act, contact the Town Clerk:

Town Hall  
Market Place  
Wincanton  
Somerset  
BA9 9LD  
Telephone: 01963 31693  
Email: [townclerk@wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk)

Requests under Freedom of Information must be made in writing and include the enquirer's name and an address for correspondence (a contact telephone number may be helpful, but not essential). When requesting information, the enquirer does not have to mention the Freedom of Information Act, nor the reason why the information is being sought. Anyone can make a request for information including members of the public, journalists, lawyers, businesses, charities and other organisations, and they do not need to reside in the parish of Wincanton.

Wincanton Town Council has a duty to respond to all requests by informing the enquirer whether or not it holds the requested information and then supplying the information (except where an exemption applies). Wincanton Town Council is statutory obliged to respond to requests within 20 working days from the day that the request was received.

Charges can be made in respect of disbursement costs (copying, printing, postage etc) to reflect the costs incurred in meeting a request. Written agreement from the

enquirer that they will pay disbursement costs should be received before any copying, printing etc is done. Charges will not be made for staff time in sourcing information if the estimated cost is less than £450.00 or 18 hours. Requests can be denied if the staffing cost necessary to retrieve/supply the information is greater than £450.00 or 18 hours (as per exemption section 12 – cost). Alternatively, a fee notice can be issued setting out the intended amount to be charged for the supply of the requested information. Written agreement from the enquirer that they will pay the extra costs must be received before any copying, printing etc is done.

Requests can be denied (wholly or in part) if an exemption applies. The Freedom of Information Act contains 32 exemptions but not all of them are applicable to Wincanton Town Council. The exemptions that are most likely to apply to Wincanton Town Council are listed below (the list is not exhaustive):

- If the request exceeds the cost limit (as already mentioned)
- If the request for information is accessible by other means
- If the requested information is intended for future publication
- If the requested information would prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs

Requests for personal information in respect of the enquirer him/herself cannot be dealt with by the Freedom of Information Act; such requests should be submitted in accordance with the Data Protection Act. If a request is too vague and/or insufficiently clear, the enquirer will be contacted for clarification. However, the 20 days response timescale would commence the day a sufficiently clear request has been received. If Wincanton Town Council does not hold all the requested information, it will supply the information it does hold and provide guidance as to whom to contact to obtain the remainder of the information. If the response is not satisfactory, the enquirer can request a review by contacting the Chair of Wincanton Town Council, please mark correspondence as Private and Confidential.

The Chair of Wincanton Town Council can be contacted at his/her email address and telephone number – the details are displayed on Wincanton Town Council noticeboard and on Wincanton Town Council website: [www.wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk)

If a review is requested it will be completed within 20 working days, or within 40 working days in exceptional cases

If the review is not satisfactory, the enquirer can contact the Information Commissioners Office:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 0303 123 1113  
Email: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)  
Website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<p><b>Class1 - Who we are and what we do</b> (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</p>	<p>15 Councillors on Wincanton Town Council. Their contact details are on the website.</p> <p>The council operates a committee structure and details are on the website.</p> <p>Contact details of officers, and the location of the office is available on the website. Wincanton Town Council, Town Hall, Market Place, Wincanton, Somerset BA9 9LD 01963 31693</p> <p><a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/</a></p>	Free
<p><b>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it</b> (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)</p>	<p>Current and previous financial year accounts are available either by email or hard copy from the office</p> <p>Annual governance and Accountability Return is available on the website or by email</p> <p><a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/annual-report.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/annual-report.html</a></p> <p>Reports from the external auditor are on the website</p> <p>Reports from the internal auditor are available by email or hard copy</p> <p>Finalised budget for the new financial year are contained within meeting reports on the website</p> <p>The precept for the current year is contained within minutes of meetings on the website</p> <p>Information on borrowing approval and loans is on the website</p> <p>Financial Regulations and Standing Orders are published on the website</p> <p>Details of relevant contracts awarded and the value would be on the website when applicable</p> <p>Members allowances information is available on request via email</p> <p>Grants given and received information is available on the website, in minutes of meetings and also available on request by email</p>	Free

<p><b>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing</b> (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)</p>	<p>Wincanton For the Future information is on the website <a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/good-stuff-fund.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/good-stuff-fund.html</a></p> <p>Internal Audit Reports are available via email or in hard copy from the Town Hall.</p> <p>Annual Playground Inspections are available in hard copy from the Town Hall.</p> <p>Newsletters are published on the website</p> <p>An annual report is published on the website</p>	Free
<p><b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b> (Decision making processes and records of decisions)</p>	<p>Agendas and reports of all council and committee meetings are published on the website. Reports that are not confidential are also published on the website with the agenda for the appropriate meetings.</p> <p><a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/agenda,-payments-and-minutes.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/agenda,-payments-and-minutes.html</a></p> <p>Minutes of all council and committee meetings are published on the website.</p> <p>Responses to planning applications received are within the minutes of the Planning Committee but also available on email</p>	Free
<p>Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)</p>	<p>The schedule of council and committee meetings is published on the website</p> <p><a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/duplicate-of-meeting-dates.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/duplicate-of-meeting-dates.html</a></p>	Free
<p><b>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures</b> (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only</p>	<p>Policies and written procedures are published on the website and available on email</p> <p><a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/council-legislation.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/council-legislation.html</a></p>	Free
<p>Information security policy</p>	<p>Policies relating to the management and protection of data are on the website and also available on email</p> <p><a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/council-legislation.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/council-legislation.html</a></p>	Free
	Available on the website	

Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	<a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/council-legislation.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/council-legislation.html</a>	Free
<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b> Currently maintained lists and registers only	Information relating to the assets and land that is managed by the council is on the website  <a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/about-wincanton.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/about-wincanton.html</a>	Free
Assets Register	This is available via email or in hard copy from the Town Hall	Free
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils)	This is available via email or in hard copy from the Town Hall	Free
Register of members' interests	Held by South Somerset District Council and available via a link on the Wincanton Town Council website  <a href="https://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/mgParishCouncilDetails.aspx?LS=17&amp;SLS=1&amp;bcr=1">https://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/mgParishCouncilDetails.aspx?LS=17&amp;SLS=1&amp;bcr=1</a>  Maintained by South Somerset District Council	Free
Register of gifts and hospitality	Available in hard copy from the Town Hall	Free
<b>Class 7 – The services we offer</b> (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)  Current information only	Available on the website  <a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/about-wincanton.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/about-wincanton.html</a>  Moor Lane Allotments: via the office  Burial grounds and closed churchyards available on the website  <a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/council-legislation.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/council-legislation.html</a>	Free
Community centres and village halls, parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Available on the website  <a href="https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/about-wincanton.html">https://wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk/about-wincanton.html</a>	Free

Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Available from the Town Hall	Free
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**Contact details:**

Town Clerk, Town Hall, Market Place, Wincanton, Somerset BA9 9LD

Telephone: 01963 31693

E-mail: [info@wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk)

Website: [www.wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.wincantontowncouncil.gov.uk)

**SCHEDULE OF CHARGES**

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
<b>Disbursement cost</b>	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost to print in office
	Photocopying @20p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost to print in office
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class
<b>Statutory Fee</b>		*In accordance with the relevant legislation (quote the actual statute)

\* the actual cost incurred by the public authority

Wincanton Town Council	Report: Clerk's Update
Full Council Meeting	Author: Locum Clerk
Date: 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2022	

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to give an update to councillors.

## 2.0 ELECTION

2.1 An election has been confirmed for 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The dates for councillor nominations to be received by South Somerset District Council to join or remain on Wincanton Town Council is between 9am on Monday 21st March and 4pm on Tuesday 5th April (the papers must be hand delivered by the officer in Yeovil). All current councillors who wish to continue must complete nominations papers. Copies of the nomination papers and guidance booklet will be emailed to all councillors. Councillors must hand deliver their nomination papers and details will be in the information that is emailed.

## 3.0 STAFF STRUCTURE

3.1 The permanent staff structure for the town council is as follows:

- Town Clerk: 30 hours per week
- Responsible Financial Officer and Committee Clerk : 15 hours per week
- Administrative Officer: 30 hours per week
- Grounds Maintenance and Works Supervisor: 37 hours per week
- 2 x Groundsmaintenance operatives; 37 hours each per week
- Project and Development Coordinator: 20 hours per week in a shared role with South Somerset District Council (10 hours to each organisation)

However, the current structure is slightly amended following the resignation of two members of staff. The Project and Development Coordinator leaves at the end of March 2022 and so that post will be considered in more detail before any recruitment campaign is entered into. The Responsible Financial Officer has resigned and as she is working through her probation period and only limited notice is required her last day of work will be Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

Therefore the temporary structure is below:

- Locum Town Clerk: 21 hours per week but varying dependent on meetings
- Deputy Locum Town Clerk: 15 hours per week
- Responsible Financial Officer: to be covered by the Deputy Locum Clerk in the short term
- Administrative Officer: 30 hours per week
- Grounds Maintenance and Works Supervisor: 37 hours per week
- 2 x Groundsmaintenance operatives; 37 hours each per week

3.2 Staffing matters are taking up a considerable amount of the Locum Clerks time but they are a priority and must be done in a confidential manner.

#### **4.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

4.1 Following on from the Internal Audit report and a tree survey some work is being done on the health and safety practices across the council. Some recommendations will be made that changes some of the practices across the whole council to ensure that the business needs of the council, and risk elements are considered appropriately.

#### **5.0 FUTURE MEETINGS**

5.1 A representative from South Somerset District Council will be invited to attend the next meeting to give an overview of the recent restructure to the Wincanton Regeneration Project. Further information will be shared with councillors in due course.

If councillors have anything they wish to add to a future agenda, can it please be sent to the Locum Clerk with sufficient detail that a report can be produced within a reasonable timeframe (and in accordance with Standing Orders). Requests on the day, or even week, that the agenda is to be published can not be accommodated.

#### **6.0 COMPLAINT FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC**

A letter complaining about the weeds, paths and general appearance of the town has been received. It will be redacted and made available at the meeting.